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THE HAWAIIAN AS AN UNSKILLED LABORER

By Wm. W. Goodale, Honolulu

The census of 1910 shows that of the total population of the Territory, 38,547 are of Hawaiian birth. Of that number, 9832 are adult males. Of the total number of adult males of Hawaiian birth in the Territory on January 31, 1913, 1074 were employed on sugar plantations. Of these, 174 were skilled men, mechanics and overseers, 904 were laborers and formed only two per cent of the 43,701 laborers employed in the principal agricultural industry of the country. The cultivation of rice and pineapples, the other important agricultural industries, employ few if any male Hawaiians, and even the raising of taro and the manufacture of poi, the staple food of the Hawaiian people, is largely in the hands of the Chinese. Portuguese and Japanese are taking the places on cattle ranches formerly filled by Hawaiians. The fishermen and many of the sailors on the inter-island fleet are Japanese.

Little would be thought of this if large numbers of Hawaiian laborers could be found living in their own homes and regularly employed in the manufacturing industries, or in other lines of trade or as producers of commodities for sale.

That, however, is not the case, and Hawaiian unskilled laborers are, to a great extent, an unattached and irresponsible part of the community, with few family ties or common bonds of interest with the rest of their people except that of race and for a few months every two years, politics.

To any one who knows the people, likes them and is in sympathy with them, and remembers their numerical strength and influence in their own country a few years ago, the condition is sad and the future of the pure Hawaiian race, as a race, seems uncertain.

OUTSIDE CAUSES

The causes of this are to a certain extent inherent, but to a much greater extent they are from outside themselves and due to conditions over which their government and their people have had little control.

They are today in many ways the passive victims of the rapid development of their own country and its resources by foreigners.

On the subject of the opening of foreign countries and their markets, John Arthur Hobson, M.A., says in a paper written for the First International Race Congress in London:

Where savage or semi-savage peoples are concerned, the task of building up sound industries and wholesome wants, the two foundations of industrial civilization, will be slow and difficult and may involve a long retention of political and economic authority before such a country can be left entirely to its own control, consistently with its own and the world's welfare. But in spite of the obvious perils which accompany such protection and education from the selfishness and greed, not only of traders but of governments, no other solution is possible.

These people have no natural or inherent right to withhold the natural resources of their country from the outside world. There is therefore no other solution than the education among civilized states of a higher sense of justice, humanity and economic wisdom in the rendering of that assistance.

While the question as to whether or not a "people has a natural or inherent right to withhold the natural resources of their country from the outside world" is certainly open to argument, the remainder of the quotation can be aptly applied to the history of Hawaii.

WAS AND IS GOOD MATERIAL

The native Hawaiian laborer was, and he still is, good material. He has contributed largely to the development of his country and his present almost complete elimination from the ranks of producers is an economic waste. The causes, as I have said, are partly inherent in the race, but not wholly, and in justice to them it is necessary to study the history of the country and its people during the past century.

In the last ninety-three years (a long human lifetime) that have elapsed since the arrival of the first missionaries, there have been many radical changes in the circumstances and customs of the people.

There has been a great change in the nationality of the men employed in agriculture and the trades, and the labor system has passed through many phases, from slavery, or enforced and unpaid labor, to freedom and a wage system. These changes have taken place during five periods of time, each as it passed, showing marked differences in the prevailing system from that of the preceding, but each merging almost imperceptibly into the next. In retrospect, however, the lines of division seem sharply drawn.

To a student of the history of labor, wages paid, the treatment of working people and their standing in the community in which they live, each of these periods deserves careful study, but in a paper of this kind, they can be merely touched upon.

FIRST PERIOD

The first period commenced before the arrival of the foreigners and continued down to, and slightly after, the arrival of the first missionaries, say about the year 1830. We do not know what changes and adjustments had taken place previous to that time that resulted in the working system found by foreigners in 1820. But it is enough for our purpose to say that the system of society, government and labor was of the feudal type, based, as was the feudal system of the old world in the middle ages, upon the ownership of the land, and no better example of this can be found than existed on Hawaii.

The common people held no property in their own right. The products of their labor belonged to the chiefs. They had no personal holdings of any kind, and their time, their women and children, and even their lives, were held at the will of their chiefs. Laborers received no pay for the work they performed for others, and they rendered compulsory service to the king, the chiefs and their agents, whenever called upon to do so. In return for their work,

and only so long as they remained loyal and subject to call for labor and for service as warriors, they were allowed the use of small tracts of land on which to raise their food, and were given rights, in common with others, to certain fish, fruits and other products of sea and forest.

Those who were skillful in the arts, such as canoe making, received greater rewards and more extended privileges than the ordinary unskilled laborers, and fighting men who distinguished themselves in the frequent wars were no doubt suitably rewarded.

ABJECT CONDITION

The condition of the common people, however, was abject, and the "good old days" often alluded to feelingly by strangers as the golden period of Hawaiian history, before contact with foreigners, and particularly the missionaries, had corrupted their manners and their morals, were so far as the common people were concerned, as purely imaginary as must have been the "Merrie England" of song and story to the lower stratum of English society of those days.

Of this period of Hawaiian history, David Malo says:

The condition of the common people was that of subjection to the chiefs, compelled to do their heavy tasks, burdened and oppressed, some even to death. The life of the people was one of patient endurance, of yielding to the chiefs to purchase their favor. The plain man must not complain. If the people were slack in doing the chief's work, they were expelled from the land, or even put to death.

The people held the chiefs in great dread. It was from the common people that the chiefs received their food and their apparel for men and women, also their homes and many other things. It was the *makaainanas* (common people) who did all the work on the land, yet all they produced belonged to the chiefs. The country people lived in a state of chronic fear and apprehension of the chiefs. It was a life of weariness, constantly burdened by one exaction after another.

There was no thrift, people were often hungry and would go without their food for days. The people about the court were bold and impudent in speech, there was hardly anyone about the court who did not practice robbery, and who was not a thief, embezzler, extortionist and a shameless beggar. Nearly everyone did these things.

This strong language is not used by an historian writing of a country and a people of the dim past, but by a man who was born twenty-seven years before the arrival of the first missionaries, and who was brought up in the customs and knew the daily life of those days.

OPPRESSIVE KAPU

Besides the tyranny and oppression by the chiefs and their agents, under which the common people lived, all the people, the rich and powerful to some extent, but more particularly, the poor and dependent, were subject to an elaborate kapu system that governed their daily life and habits. It affected the time and manner of doing the simplest acts, their food and their relations with each other, and imposed arbitrary rules of conduct and severe penalties for violating them. This kapu system, while intimately connected with the religious beliefs and fears of the people bore directly upon the labor system and the relations of the common people with their superiors in wealth and position.

The visits of Cook and Vancouver, and intercourse with traders during the early years of the nineteenth century, while giving the Hawaiians some experience with the forms of civilization, caused little change in the daily life and primitive customs of the people. Firearms had been introduced and they had learned the value and use of iron and other metals. The sandalwood trade had been developed, but the labor system remained unchanged, and it was the system described by David Malo that the missionaries found upon their arrival here in 1820.

From this time on, changes in the life and habits of the people came rapidly.

SECOND PERIOD

The second period in the industrial history of the Hawaiian people, 1830 to 1860, resulted in great changes in the character and ambitions of the people and a complete change in the labor system. The influence of mis-

sionaries, teachers and other foreigners, then rapidly increasing in number, and the force of their example in industry, changed in many ways the ideas of the people, gave them self-respect and developed in them traits of character that the old life had left dormant. Foreigners of all kinds, whatever their motives may have been, were consciously or unconsciously, the instructors of the natives of all ranks and of all ages, from the king down to the humblest peasant.

This period of thirty years may be considered that most favorable to the native Hawaiians. It was a formative period. A period of instruction in civilized arts and ideals and an awakening of the people to the knowledge of their own powers and their rights, there was also a fostering care almost paternal in its nature from the king, the government, the foreign population and from the governments of the United States and England.

CONSTITUTION GRANTED

Constitutional government was established. The motto placed upon the coat of arms, "Ua mau ke ea o ka aina i ka pono" and the earliest laws that were passed are evidence that the new government was based upon the high ideals and aims of life of its founders and the advisers of the king.

The powers of the chiefs were curbed and they voluntarily surrendered many of their old rights and privileges. The land system was established, and the common people were given the right to own land. Laws were passed making it easy for them to do so. Prices were made low and deferred payments were allowed. The necessary formalities for acquiring land were made simple and inexpensive, and there were no requirements as to future residence or non-alienation.

The people were encouraged and even urged to buy land, to have settled homes and to live upon their lands and cultivate them without fear of losing their crops or other fruits of their labor to the chiefs or head men. They began to own cattle, horses and goats, but as these animals

required large areas of land for their support, they were allowed by the chiefs who owned the large lands, to run in a common pasture, subject to some restrictions.

The benefit to the nation resulting from having a large population residing upon their own lands, and engaged in agriculture, was strongly urged by all foreign residents who had the good of the people at heart, and by the missionaries particularly, and was fully appreciated by the king, Kamehameha III, and by the leading chiefs.

The report of the land commissioners, William Richards, John Ricord, J. Y. Kanehoa, John Ii and Z. Kaauwai, dated December 10, 1845, says:

The Hawaiian rulers have learned by experience, that regard must be had to the immutable law of property, in things real, as lands, and in things personal, as chattels, that the well being of their country must depend essentially upon the proper development of their internal resources of which land is the principal, and that in order to insure its proper cultivation and improvement, the holder must have some stake in it more solid than the bare permission to evolve his daily bread from an article to which he and his children can lay no intrinsic claim.

THE NATURAL LIFE

An agricultural life was the natural life of the Hawaiians. It was the kind of life that the first missionaries knew, and from which they came, that of the early years of the nineteenth century in the older Eastern States, an essentially rural life, when cities were small, few in number and far apart. The villages were small communities built around the churches, town hall and stores as a center, and where lived the clergymen, the few professional men, the mechanics and tradesmen. It was a country of farmers, and even the lawyers and doctors had farms of their own, producing in many cases the larger part of their incomes. The blacksmiths, carpenters, painters and wheelwrights had farms on which they worked when not busy at their trades. The wives and daughters of these men kept their homes and in them did much of the work now done on a large scale in factories. They made the cloth and the clothes worn by themselves and their families. The farms supplied

nearly all the necessities of life. The sons grew up to, and followed, as a rule, the trades or professions of their fathers, and took the same places in the life of the community.

It was such a life, and such customs, that the missionaries brought to Hawaii and grafted upon the life of the people here, and at first with much success.

A FEW SURVIVALS

After the adoption of the land system, about 1850, there came a period, during which a large number of the people acquired and lived upon homesteads or farms that they owned. The results of their education along such lines could be plainly seen twenty or thirty years ago, and to a small extent now in the houses and lands owned by the older generation of Hawaiians that is now rapidly passing off the stage. These places can be found in nearly all parts of the islands. They stand upon the lands still owned by the original patentees or their sons. They have been the homes of their owners and their families for many years. They are comfortably furnished, there are pictures on the walls, the family Bible holds the place of honor on the center table, there are newspapers that are carefully read, the older members of the family are neatly and plainly dressed, and they form the main support of the churches of which they are the faithful attendants.

The older men, from sixty to seventy years of age, may still be seen working in their taro patches; they know the proper time for planting crops. The older women are skillful with the needle and in other domestic arts. They make hats and matting from fibers prepared by themselves that are of fine texture and durable. They are good housekeepers, careful of money and ambitious for their children.

These people speak with scorn of the "kapulu" (slovenly) habits of some of their own people and foreigners. They speak of the children of the missionaries with whom they grew up, by their first names, and of the missionaries themselves and their teachers, with affection and respect. The owners

of these homes are the men who have been in nearly all cases, on the right side of social questions and in politics.

It was from such homes that the first generation of plantation and other laborers went out, and they have never gone back to them. Many of the homes, after the death of the original owners, have gone into decay, or into the hands of foreigners, or have been dismantled to make room for cane fields.

ARGUMENT AGAINST HOMESTEADS

In the history of these homes and farms may be found one of the arguments against the present system of small homesteads. Successful homesteading of lands to build up a country and a permanent population is possible only in a new and undeveloped country where there are large areas of cheap and unimproved land and where crops can be raised at first, under natural conditions. The homesteads or farms must be large enough in area to allow for future subdivisions so that it will not be necessary for the younger generation to move away because there is not room for them in the community. Any plan for establishing a permanent population on lots of a few acres each is not true homesteading, and has in itself all the elements of failure.

MODIFIED FEUDALISM

In the earlier years of this period, there still continued in force a modified form of the old feudal labor system. With a civilized form of government there came the establishment of royalty and other requirements of the nation that must be paid for. For such purposes it was necessary to raise money by taxation and there was also a labor tax for the government. Labor was still required of the people for the king personally and for the chiefs. Men were compelled by them to work in their taro patches, or in other employments, one day out of five or one day out of seven, or a certain number of days each month, for which they received no pay. This was finally recog-

nized as an evil, and questions as to its effect upon the people were addressed to the missionaries in an official enquiry by Hon. R. C. Wyllie, minister of foreign affairs, in May, 1846.

Rev. Mr. Hitchcock replied as follows:

From what I know of the people I can say that had they the usual inducements to industry, they would become industrious and happy. They can never become so while one-fifth of their time is required by the government.

Rev. L. D. Maigret, afterwards Bishop of Arathea, said:

Abolish the labor tax which makes the natives a nation of slaves, a people without hope of future amelioration, disinclined to labor and without any energy or industry.

Rev. Mr. Emerson said:

I think two things are necessary to make this people industrious and provident, First, the feeling that the land is their own, for themselves and for their posterity. Second, the feeling that the land is of real value, and capable of being improved in value, and that all improvements are private gain. But this is impossible so long as one-half of every man's time is required by government, to be paid as a tax to the nation and to the landlord together. I say one-half of the time, because, during the week that a man is required to work three days as a tax, it takes him the other three working days to cultivate and cook his food for those working days so that one-half of his time is demanded by government.

GROWING DEMAND FOR LABOR

During this period, the foreign population of the Islands rapidly increased, and their presence and influence stimulated the development of new kinds of business and diversified farming, such as the growing of cane for the manufacture of sugar and molasses, the cultivation of rice and the manufacture of castor and kukui oils. Corn, wheat and beans were raised for the use of foreigners residing here and for sale to the whaling and trading ships that had begun to come here in large numbers. With the growing industries, there was a demand for reliable and industrious laborers greater than the apparent supply.

At about this time there occurred the interesting episode in Hawaiian history known as the Belgian colonization

scheme. This was based upon a lease to Messrs. Ladd, Brinsmade and Hooper by the king and government, of all the unoccupied lands of the kingdom for a term of one hundred years. The plans of the company were comprehensive and carefully worked out. They began work at Koloa, Kauai, and made contracts with several planters to raise cane and other crops.

King Kamehameha III agreed to cause to be planted fifty acres of cane near every mill that might be established by the company, and others, including Hawaiians and foreigners, made similar contracts. The sugar made from cane so raised was to be divided, one-half to the mill and one-half to the planter. Laborers were to be employed at just and equitable rates. Business men and others who were anxious to develop the country quickly and for the greatest profit to themselves, considered the Hawaiians, who were then the only available laborers, and probably numerous enough for any ordinary purpose, as inefficient and unreliable, and they believed that there could be no real development of the resources of the country, and no inducement to capitalists to bring money into the country, unless there could be brought about the immigration of a large number of people accustomed to work and willing to do so.

COMPULSORY LABOR

Mr. Godfrey Rhodes, in a letter to Mr. Wyllie, written in June, 1847, says:

It is a fact pretty well known at present that the natives have a very strong disinclination to labor, which appears in many cases almost insuperable. I would suggest to you with all respect, whether this might not be overcome by the adoption of some plan similar to the following: That a law should be enacted by which all the male population, from the age of fourteen to twenty years, should become the wards of government, who would apprentice them to different trades or occupations, as each should choose; that the persons so receiving them as apprentices, should pay a moderate annual tax for each, to the government as well as wages to the apprentices, in proportion to his usefulness.

Mr. Thomas Brown, also in a letter to Mr. Wyllie, said:

With the same number of men I now employ, I could in England, have accomplished, in one-fourth of the time, more than I have now got through. . . . I have no difficulty in keeping up my complement of men. . . . Of course there is a great difference amongst them, but generally speaking, they are neither stupid nor unskillful, when they choose to exert themselves, and I find that the middle-aged men are universally the best. . . . Now with respect to the introduction of foreign laborers, the chief difficulty appears to me to be the high price of food. . . . But I imagine that the advantages of their introduction would be great, to any planter who had a sufficiently large capital to meet the outlay.

FIRST IMMIGRATION PLAN

The king was persuaded to endorse the plans of Messrs. Ladd and Co., which included the colonization here of large numbers of Belgians, and Article 3, of the agreement with Ladd and Co., is as follows:

The said party of the first part (Kamehameha III) authorizes the said party of the second party (Ladd and Co.) to introduce into the Sandwich Islands, persons of various vocations, of whom the government of the said Islands shall determine the number and quality, and to each person thus introduced he will convey in full property, lands from those embraced in the contract with Messrs. Ladd and Co. . . . He further agrees to accord to all such persons thus introduced, all the rights, privileges and immunities, both civil and political, which are allowed to native born subjects, these grants and privileges to be conferred on the condition of their naturalization, according to the established usages of European civilized nations.

This agreement was entered into in 1843, and was the first attempt on the part of the government, to establish a homestead system, and an agricultural population, that would become producers of wealth and develop the country. Great hopes were held of the success of the scheme, and many of the responsible residents endorsed it.

Messrs. Tinker, Lafon and Gulick wrote to Ladd and Co. in 1840 urging the erection of an additional mill at Koloa because the natives were turning more and more to the cultivation of cane, and they say:

We trust that the success of your enterprise here thus far, justifies the enlargement of your operations, and that if the recompense in a pecuniary way, is insufficient, you may find a reward in the industry which it has awakened and gratified in this portion of the nation.

Rev. Messrs. Lowell, Smith, Knapp and Bingham, and Messrs. Chamberlain, Castle, Dimond and Cooke, wrote to Ladd and Co., as follows:

It gives us pleasure to state to you that we believe the direct influence of your factory will be salutary in its effects upon the native population of these Islands. . . . We consider such establishments as yours . . . as highly important to the best interests of this nation in the promotion of industry and virtue, and of the development of the resources of the country.

EXPERIMENT FAILED

The plan of Messrs. Ladd and Company for the development of the country under their lease, and for colonizing the lands with Belgians, came to sudden end. For about ten years thereafter, the only available labor for development of the country was that of the native Hawaiians. Several small sugar plantations had been started, and in addition to the sugar and molasses for local consumption, small quantities were made for export. In 1837 two tons of sugar and sixty-five barrels of molasses were shipped out of the country, but the industry grew slowly and even though stimulated by the growing trade with California, in 1860, the last year of this period, only 722 tons of sugar and 2600 barrels of molasses were exported.

FIRST CHINESE

Even with this slow growth of the sugar industry the shortage of labor was keenly felt in the districts where cane was raised for milling, and in 1852 a small shipment of Chinese laborers was sent for.

Natives, however, still continued to be the main source of supply, and they became more efficient and reliable as laborers, teamsters, mill men and mechanics. The inter-island schooners and steamers were manned by Hawaiian sailors, and with the help of the natives in all lines of work, it would seem that, on the whole, the country was being developed slowly, but in a healthy way. The wealth of the country was increasing, and it was fairly well distributed.

There were many sections of the country, however, where sugar was not made, and where large numbers of Hawaiians lived quietly, engaged in fishing and cultivating their own crops according to the old method of agriculture. The life upon which the nation had entered, was, on the whole, a good life, and if it could have lasted for a hundred years longer without the intrusion of business on a large scale that preceded and followed the Reciprocity Treaty with the United States, the Hawaiian people might have developed fixed habits of industry, sobriety and strength of character that would have saved them as a nation.

The Hawaiians during the thirty years between 1830 and 1860, probably reached the highest point in their history as a nation, and were more progressive and happy than they had ever been before or were destined to be again. With the year 1860, closed their best and most hopeful era.

THIRD PERIOD

The third period is the sixteen years commencing with the decline of the whaling industry, and ending with the enactment of the Reciprocity Treaty in 1876.

The capital and labor formerly employed in whaling were diverted into other channels, and were naturally turned toward the sugar industry.

The Hawaiian population then numbered 67,084, of whom 21,275 lived on Oahu. Up to this time, the laborers and many of the mechanics, such as coopers, carpenters, blacksmiths and sugar boilers employed on the sugar plantations were Hawaiians. Chinese had been brought here to help supply the growing demand for labor, but they were so few in number relatively that Hawaiians were the main source of supply for all purposes. Those not employed on plantations, ranches and ships, were the farmers who raised taro for their own use and for supplying those in other industries with their staple article of food; they were the fishermen also along all the coasts. Others were employed in the smaller industries, such as the gathering of

pulu, of which 369 tons were exported in 1862, fungus, 189 tons of which were exported in 1863, coffee, 155 tons in 1865, and salt, 2513 tons in 1870.

With the development of the sugar business, however, more plantations were started, some of them on unimproved or even waste lands that had no resident population from which to draw laborers. Hawaiians would not go willingly to places distant from the sea, where the water for bathing was limited, and where there was no local supply of taro. The favorite places were those like Lahaina, Koloa, Wailuku and Waihee, where there were large numbers of people living under natural conditions.

COMPETITION AND CONTRACTS

The starting of new plantations, however, created a demand for labor in excess of the apparent supply, and this resulted in great competition between employers for men. Shipping agents were employed by the plantations, and as they received a fee for each man secured, men were enticed away from one plantation to another by the payment of higher wages or by means less honorable. During this period there was a great development of the labor contract system under the Masters and Servants Act. This system was not, apparently, repugnant to the Hawaiians as it was merely an extension to service on land of the custom of shipping for service at sea, with which they were familiar, many of them having been sailors in the whaling fleet. When a sailor engaged for a voyage he received an advance of wages, nominally for the purpose of buying an outfit of clothes, or to leave with his family for their support; and when the custom of shipping for a term of years on land was adopted, the laborers asked for and received an advance of wages to be worked out as a debt.

In order to get men for the plantations, the shipping agents or runners would go about the islands to recruit men, and tempted by the promise of an advance of money with which to buy some necessity, or for a horse or some other extravagance, men would leave other employers,

or their homes in the more secluded valleys, to work as shipped laborers on the sugar plantations or cattle ranches. Men convicted of crimes or misdemeanors in the courts, and unable to pay their fines, would be offered employment by a runner who would pay the fine as an advance, or loan to be worked out on the condition that the man would ship as a laborer. Notwithstanding all the efforts made to induce the Hawaiians to work regularly on the sugar plantations, there were not men enough available and it was found necessary to send for more Chinese. Japanese were brought here also.

CRIME OF CONTRACT-BREAKING

All foreign unskilled labor came here indentured, or under contract to serve for a term of years, at stipulated rates of wages and hours of labor. These contracts were entered into under the Masters and Servants Act. The law provided means of enforcing the contracts by fines or imprisonment, or both, for violations of the terms of the contract by either party, the employer or the laborer.

Violations of these contracts on the part of the laborer, were of two kinds, *haalele hana*, or desertion, *hoole hana*, or refusal to obey orders. A man who wilfully absented himself from the service of his master could be arrested by warrant, tried by a justice, ordered back to work, and compelled to serve double the time of his absence (but not more than one year after the natural expiration of his contract). If a man refused to serve, he might be committed to prison until he would consent to serve according to the law.

For a second offense, either desertion or refusal to work, he might be sentenced to imprisonment at hard labor for not to exceed three months, and, at the expiration of his sentence, he was then obliged to go back to his master and serve his original time and any penal term that might be added by the justice as a penalty. All costs incurred in any suit under this act were charged against the servant if found guilty and were endorsed upon the contract by the justice.

THE PROTECTING CLAUSES

The Masters and Servants Act provided a certain amount of protection to the servants or laborers under contract, and section 1423 of the Code provided that cancellation of the contract should follow conviction of the master or his overseer for any cruelty or misuse of a laborer or other violation of the terms of the contract, and that the master or his overseer might be fined and imprisoned also. The docking of time and fining laborers without their consent were not allowed by the courts.

Section 1424 provided for the cancellation of the contract in case of the death of the master. Contracts were not assignable and laborers could not be held for debt incurred while under contract and compelled to work out such debt after the expiration of the contract. Notwithstanding the protecting clauses in the law and a number of decisions of the higher courts in favor of the laborers, the system as it worked out was a form of peonage, and some employers used unfair means to keep their laborers in poverty and compel them to reship.

“TOO INDEPENDENT”

Some of the plantation managers honestly believed that men would not work except under contract, and that their labor supply could be kept up in no other way. The employment of free laborers was discouraged, they were too independent, and some of the plantations and ranches would not give them work. Many managers of sugar plantations, however, were opposed to the system. In its practical working it was in many ways unfair to both employer and employé. Free laborers were paid higher wages than the men under contract, and under the fixed rate of wages for all contract men, those who were strong, able and willing to work, received no more pay than those who were lazy or weak, and this tended on the part of the laborers, to establish low standards of efficiency. The employer could not discharge the lazy, the vicious or the stupid if once under contract, and recourse to the courts was expensive and unsatisfactory.

The abuses under the system, while probably much exaggerated, were serious enough to attract attention, and led to attempts to abolish the laws as they stood, or amend them sufficiently to make great reforms in the system. The charge was made in the press and in common talk, that the laborers on plantations lived in slavery and that managers and overseers were little better than slave drivers.

ADVERTISER LED REFORM FIGHT

Feeling ran high on both sides of the controversy. Planters were accused of ill-treatment of their men, and the judges of the lower courts of venality in their methods of administering the law, and on the other hand, threats were made against the leaders in the work for reform, among whom were H. M. Whitney, editor of *The Advertiser*, and J. O. Carter, who was then in the legislature.

The agitation had a good effect on the whole, and resulted in some changes, if not immediately in the law itself, in the treatment of the men under the law.

The system, however, endured all the attacks made at this time and the close of the period saw it in full force.

DISASTROUS TO HAWAIIANS

The contract labor system was in many ways disastrous to the Hawaiian laborers. On plantations where men had no homes of their own, the conditions were not favorable for family life. The makahiki houses, or quarters, were not suitable places for women and children. It could not be a natural life, and the presence of large numbers of men and comparatively few women, caused many of the evils that follow such conditions.

Looking back to those days, much that then seemed to be a matter of course, now seems unnecessary. The housing of men and their families, the wages paid, and the treatment of men in other ways, need not be, and should not be such that the only way to keep them is by the penal enforcement of a contract and fine or imprisonment for failure to carry out the terms of the contract.

SUGAR PRODUCTION

The production of sugar during this period, and under the labor system then in vogue, increased from 722 tons in 1860, to 13,000 tons in 1876, an increase of 1800 per cent, but it was made possible only by the help of the large importations of foreign laborers to supply the demand.

The period from 1830 to 1860 was that of the flow of the tide, and high tide for the Hawaiian people in prosperity, development of character and control of their country, but the period from 1860 to 1876 was the beginning of the ebb.

FOURTH PERIOD

The fourth period in the history of labor in Hawaii begins with the great development of the sugar industry following the enactment of the Reciprocity Treaty with the United States in 1876 and continued until annexation to that country in 1898.

It was a period of great and rapid growth in wealth. The production of sugar increased from 13,000 tons in 1876 to 222,000 tons in 1898.

The labor system continued to be the contract system of the last period and during the earlier years there was still a large number of Hawaiians on the sugar plantations. The Onomea plantation in 1885 had 148 Hawaiian laborers, and there were others with as large or even larger proportion of the entire force employed. Owing, however, to the large influx of Chinese, Japanese, Germans, Norwegians, Portuguese, Galicians and South Sea Islanders that had been brought in by thousands to supply the ever increasing demands, the Hawaiian laborers became less and less of a factor in the sugar industry.

WASTE, DRINK, CORRUPTION

This period of twenty-two years from 1876 to 1898 saw the end of the old monarchical government, then the provisional government, the Republic and finally, annexation to the United States. It was a period of exploitation of

the resources of the country, the government and the people, for business purposes and resulted incidentally in loss of standing and influence in the community, that affected all classes of the people, to some extent. Simple habits of life and dress were abandoned and there followed imitation and emulation of the foreigners in extravagance and luxury. The influence of the King and Court was not elevating. There was a general removal of wholesome restraints and among others, the law against giving or selling liquors to native Hawaiians was repealed on the ground that it was class legislation. The use of liquor became more general among men and women and the habit of using opium rapidly increased. Opium smuggling was then at its height, and the easy money it yielded was attractive to foreigners and natives alike. This resulted in bribery of officials and other forms of corruption, and lower standards, moral, social and political.

The poverty caused by bad habits was a powerful influence in the breaking up of homes, the separation of women from their husbands and the scattering of families.

FLOCKING INTO CITY

During this period began the abandonment of the remoter villages of the group and the people flocked to the larger towns and to places where more money could be earned for the gratification of expensive tastes. People left their old homes also, because of the encroachment of the sugar and rice plantations upon the lands in the watered valleys. This in itself need not have been injurious to the native people, but in too many cases the sale or leasing of their lands to foreigners resulted in their having large sums of money which they spent recklessly. After leaving their old homes, they did not, or could not, buy new ones.

The thoughtful Hawaiian must regard this period, from 1876 to 1898, as one of great injury to his people, and the destructive influences were such that the churches, the schools, the people themselves and their best friends could make but little headway against them.

FIFTH PERIOD

The fifth period is that commencing in 1898 and is that in which we are now living. Annexation to the United States ended all labor contracts entered into under the old Masters and Servants Act. The sudden and complete change in the status of all laborers then under contract, did not make the upheaval that had been expected.

The labor contract system had been falling into disrepute and disuse and many of the plantation owners and managers were glad to see the end of it. During the last years of the system, deserters were rarely arrested and taken into court, and the law providing for their punishment was rapidly becoming a dead letter. Laborers, while still under contract, had begun to work under profit sharing or piece work system that proved very satisfactory to laborers and employers.

The production of sugar has increased from 222,000 tons in 1898 to 585,000 tons in 1912, and entirely by the use of free labor.

FEW HAWAIIAN LABORERS NOW

Statistics kept by the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association show that the number of Hawaiians on the sugar plantations has grown less and less with each succeeding year until as a race, they are negligible as a source of supply for general plantation work. They do not like to work in gangs at routine work, and they have never liked to work with men of other nationalities. The only instance in recent years of Hawaiians being willing to do regular plantation work, in large numbers, during the strike at Wai-pahu and Aiea in 1909, does not prove anything.

The writer wishes to express his own full appreciation of the Hawaiian laborer, in the field, the mill and in other lines of work. There have been no better men employed on the plantations than the Hawaiians, strong, willing and efficient, and their faults, if any, have been easily forgotten when their good qualities have been considered. They have always worked well when properly treated, and have never been quarrelsome, revengeful or treacherous.

Some of the causes of their present condition have been outlined, but references to the diseases and habits of civilization that have caused a decrease in the population of the group have been left out intentionally. They belong to another subject and more especially to the always debatable question as to whether or not contact with the white man must necessarily be injurious to the dark races.

In 1858, Prince Lot, afterwards King Kamehameha V, but at that time minister of the interior, said of his own people:

The elevation of the Hawaiian people to the level of the people in civilized lands is a problem which the pious, the good and the true have endeavored to solve, and with what success let those answer whose spears drank the blood of their enemies on the pali of Nuuanu, whose relatives or friends bled on the altars of Kaili or Kalaipahoa; let those answer who owned nothing, not even the hope of a future, who were slaves in the deepest sense of the word.

But though the change has been great and marvelous, though the steps in the ladder of civilization have been cleared by bounds rather than by the toilsome progress that has characterized the upward career of other nations, yet let us not flatter ourselves that the problem has been solved and the good achieved.

Foreign countenance, foreign aid cannot do that for us which if it is done at all must be done by ourselves.

Much of the work of restoring the people to the position they held, must come and is now coming, from the schools that are teaching the children and fitting the young men and women to take their places in the world, beside, and on even terms with, those of other races.

The old cry of "Hawaii for the Hawaiians" should be abandoned; it was always a sign of weakness. The days of paternal care and of making allowances for weakness of character and lack of a sense of responsibility because of race, have come to an end. It is for the good of the race and of each individual that it is only as a man and as a responsible member of society, that a Hawaiian can now expect to hold his place in the community.